

§ 644.8

(d) Possess a billfish with its head, fins, or bill removed shoreward of the outer boundary of the EEZ or through landing, as specified in §644.21(c).

(e) Possess or retain a billfish by a vessel with a pelagic longline or drift net aboard or harvested by gear other than rod and reel, as specified in §644.22.

(f) Purchase, barter, trade, sell, or offer for sale a billfish harvested from its management unit, as specified in §644.24(a).

(g) Falsify information submitted in accordance with §644.24(b).

(h) As a dealer or seafood processor, possess a billfish or related species without the documentation specified in §644.24(b), or with incomplete or falsified documentation.

(i) Interfere with, obstruct, delay, or prevent by any means an investigation, search, seizure, or disposition of seized property in connection with enforcement of the Magnuson Act.

(Information collection requirements in paragraph (g) were approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 0648-0216)

[53 FR 37769, Sept. 28, 1988, as amended at 54 FR 14239, Apr. 10, 1989; 56 FR 13417, Apr. 2, 1991]

§644.8 Facilitation of enforcement.

See §620.8 of this chapter.

§644.9 Penalties.

See §620.9 of this chapter.

Subpart B—Management Measures

§644.20 Fishing year.

The fishing year is January 1 through December 31.

§644.21 Size limits.

(a) The following minimum size limits, expressed in terms of lower jaw-fork length (LJFL), apply for the possession of billfish shoreward of the outer boundary of the EEZ, regardless of where caught:

- (1) Blue marlin—86 in.
- (2) White marlin—62 in.
- (3) Sailfish—57 in.
- (4) Longbill spearfish—no minimum size.

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(b) A billfish under the minimum size limit caught shoreward of the outer boundary of the EEZ must be released by cutting the line near the hook without removing the fish from the water.

(c) A billfish possessed aboard a fishing vessel shoreward of the outer boundary of the EEZ must have its head, fins, and bill intact, and a billfish landed from a fishing vessel in an Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico, or Caribbean coastal state must have its head, fins, and bill intact through landing. Such billfish may be eviscerated but must otherwise be maintained in a whole condition.

(d) The following approximations of the minimum size limits for blue marlin, white marlin, and sailfish, expressed in terms of EFL, LJFL, TL, and whole, live weight, are provided for the convenience of fishermen. These approximations may not be substituted for the minimum size limits expressed in terms of LJFL specified in paragraph (a) of this section.

	Eye-fork length (in.)	Lower jaw-fork length (in.)	Total length (in.)	Whole, live wt. (lbs.)
Blue marlin	75	86	110	200
White marlin	53	62	81	50
Sailfish	49	57	76	30

[53 FR 37769, Sept. 28, 1988, as amended at 56 FR 13417, Apr. 2, 1991]

§644.22 Gear limitations.

(a) The possession or retention shoreward of the outer boundary of the EEZ of a billfish harvested by gear other than rod and reel is prohibited.

(b) The possession or retention shoreward of the outer boundary of the EEZ of a billfish by a vessel with a pelagic longline or drift net aboard is prohibited.

§644.23 Incidental catch restrictions.

A billfish harvested by gear other than rod and reel shoreward of the outer boundary of the EEZ must be released in a manner that will ensure maximum probability of survival. A billfish caught by a pelagic longline shoreward of the outer boundary of the EEZ must be released by cutting the line near the hook without removing the fish from the water.